Dialogue Topic: Improving Safety through Urban Design and Integrated Planning

1. Purpose of this Learning Note

Given MILE's focus on *knowledge management* and our emphasis on sharing lessons learned with fellow practitioners, we are committed to developing LEARNING NOTES after each Executive Dialogue session. These notes will summarise the key learnings that came through during the presentation and the discussions. It will also contain general impressions from the seminar.

Please be reminded that this Learning Note is a first draft and we would welcome your comments and additions. Once your feedback has been received, we will finalise them and post them on our MILE website which is currently under construction. Attached to this note, you will find the PowerPoint presentations from our presenters, and a database of participants. Once our website is operational, our blog facility will allow you to chat with other colleagues around the content of the seminar. With time too, we hope to provide suitable pre-readings and relevant GET ABSTRACT links. So please watch this space...

2. Focus of our Inaugural Seminar

The issue of creating a safer city has been a talking point for some time now. Not only is it a priority of our national government, but it has come through as a key driver in both our long term plan and five year IDP. Against this backdrop, the seminar focused on asking the question "are we as local government practitioners involved in the built environment recognising the importance that urban design and planning are having on creating safer communities, and generally a much safer city?"

After a powerful and thought provoking THINK PIECE from German born Michael Krause, who had worked extensively in Inanda and Cato Manor before heading up the innovative VPUU programme in Cape Town's Khayelitsha Township, eThekwini practitioners grappled with the following questions:

- How relevant is what we have heard from the Khayelitsha experience for us in eThekwini?
- Have we missed the point in Durban?
- What can we do to get CPTED back onto our agenda?
- Are we as urban designers, architects, land use planners, parks practitioners consciously thinking about making our communities, our city safer?
- SO WHAT…. what lessons have we learned today… and what can we do from tomorrow…?

3. Top 9 Lessons Learned from *Khayelitsha* Case Study Presentation

3.1. An area based INTEGRATED approach works very well and can unleash great creativity, innovation and can mobilise lots of local participation too. For us in eThekwini, we need to think about what the lessons learned in our own ABM process meant for us and what institutional vehicles are best suited to ensure integrated development that promotes safe and liveable local environments.

3.2. In designing INCLUSIVE projects, it is critical to think about the different facets of EXCLUSION   i.e. ECONOMIC, INSTITUTIONAL, SOCIAL and CULTURAL too! Focusing only on economic inclusion can be problematic.

3.3. CCTV technology is only a part of the solution… NOT the solution in itself!!! Michael Krause stressed the need for the conscious designing of more active defensible space and for communities to literally themselves serve as CCTV cameras. The trick is to increase passive surveillance by residents themselves: or as Michael puts it "positive occupation of perceived dangerous spaces".

3.4. We need to think about whether our IDPs are sometimes TOO STRATEGIC. Our challenge is to figure out how to bring them down to the people on the ground. How do they inform realistic community-based plans that have discretionary budgets where communities feel they are part of the decision-making process. This is certainly something that eThekwini felt strongly about, but still lots of work still needs to be done, before we get this right. Oh, by the way… every Community Action Plan in Khayelitsha actually gets signed by the Mayor, thereby guaranteeing political support.

3.5 CAPACITY AND MENTORSHIP is a key ingredient for success. Without this, community safety planning would not succeed.

3.6. Urban Designers need to be more actively involved in thinking about community safety. For example, in Khayelitsha, designers were planning 'active boxes' where security guards/police watch over the streets. In addition, a mix of activities in an area were planned. A novel idea of 'work-live units' where buildings are occupied 24 hours a day, for business during the day on the bottom floor and as residential units at night above seemed quite an innovative idea.

3.7 Social Crime Prevention using local communities to volunteer in exchange for training credit was another innovation that stood out. This is something that our ABM Managers might want to think about.

3.8 A staged approach is necessary – any community-safety project cannot be achieved overnight. Practitioners need to understand this.

3.9 Ensuring success in such local projects that enhance community safety hinge on a few critical pre-conditions. These include inter alia:

- Strong political leadership
- A suitable budget provision helps – external funding from Germany certainly helped the process
- The need for stakeholders to be open, vulnerable and to embrace learning
- Setting up of institutional arrangements at community level
- Strong community leadership
- Partnerships with key sectors
- Integrated and area based approach
- Integrous and reputable Project Manager, who understands people, and can work with them.

4 Six Key Learnings from Seminar Discussion / Facilitated Session

Note that whilst detailed notes of all discussion are recorded separately, and a video recording will be produced that can be downloaded from the MILE website, once up and running, the following are the main discussion threads that emerged from the dialogue:

4.1. Whilst a lot of good work is happening in eThekwini, we have NOT really cracked the issue of **integration**. All departments are NOT necessarily working together, and a greater buy- in for integration across the board is needed. Interestingly, Michael Krause

appeared to have succeeded simply because he was outside of a line department – we need to really think long and hard about what this means for us.

4.2. Whilst design is clearly important, it is imperative that the **social causes of crime** are examined. This was a point also mentioned by the City Manger in his address to the practitioners.

4.3. Of all the talking points, perhaps the most poignant was that of whether we have truly **re-integrated the apartheid city**. From what appeared to be a somewhat polarised discussion between the planners, designer and built form practitioners and those who were not, there was a sense that not enough had been done to address the inequalities that still prevail in our City. For example the issue of some residents enjoying beautifully manicured parks in historically advantaged areas, and other residents not having access to decent parks was raised. The issue of cultural sensitivity of planning and design practitioners was made passionately by some of the executives. What was quite clear was that this issue of parity in service delivery is indeed an important issue for debate.

4.4. Cape Town has successfully involved tertiary institutions as partners in local projects. As Knowledge Management is not established in the city, they have identified the universities as sites of knowledge. Perhaps MILE will need to see how we as eThekwini can **work much closer with our tertiary institutions**.

4.5. It was quite clear, especially with Michael Krause's acknowledgement of eThekwini's invaluable inputs in the Cape Town project, that the CPTED principles have indeed been around in Durban. It has been utilised in the design of Bridge City and the KwaMashu Town Centre. So again the point was made that clearly good work has been done in the past by the planning and urban design / Safer Cities offices. However the challenge is **sustaining these efforts and mainstreaming** them across the organisation, and changing the mindsets of other professionals.

4.6. Whilst the participants appreciated the dialogue session, there was a sense that we all needed to **stop talking and start doing**. To this effect, it was suggested that this Learning Note be circulated to the DCMs Forum for them to consider how best to action some of the learnings.

5. Impressions from our Inaugural Seminar

From a MILE perspective, our team was highly encouraged at the level of response from practitioners. Although our analysis revealed that top management participation was not as expected (with only four Heads and one DCM attending our inaugural seminar), having the City Manager who made time to share his thoughts amidst the crisis of a strike was useful and showed support for the series by City Leadership.

The openness, honesty and frankness of the discussion was most impressive. Participants used the platform created by MILE for open dialogue to the fullest. Real issues that affected them were allowed to surface, and in the following months, these issues will themselves form the focus of debates.

A separate learnings document on the logistical aspects of the workshop (the catering, venue, time, facilitation model, etc) is currently being prepared, and will be put up on the website and in the DMS MILE folder shortly.

6. Summary of Workshop Proceedings from the Imagine Durban session on CPTED and Crime Mapping.

After the MILE Seminar there was a more detailed Imagine Durban session on CPTED and Crime Mapping. This session included presentations from Martin Xaba on CPTED and Godfrey Devulana on Crime Mapping. Please refer to the Appendix for notes on the end of the day group discussion.

6.1 Key Summary Points from CPTED Presentation

The key points that arose from Martin Xaba's presentation on CPTED are outlined in his PowerPoint presentation which is attached with this learning note. Some of the key points raised were:

- 6.1.1 Martin explained that there is a "crime triangle":
  - A ready, willing and able offender
  - A vulnerable, attractive or provocative target/victim and
  - A favourable environment which included the physical location as well as the people and the activities that might deter or encourage the offender
- 6.1.2 There are many different strategies to deal with different aspects of the crime triangle. The purpose of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design is to

make the physical environment in which crime takes place less favourable to crime.

6.1.3   Through the work of various agencies on CPTED in South Africa five key principles have been developed that help to understand if an environment reduces or increases opportunities for crime. The key principles are:

- Surveillance and visibility: Are there opportunities for users and residents to observe an area as they go about their day to day activities (referred to as passive surveillance)? Is it easy for security personnel to observe an area (referred to as active surveillance)?

- Territoriality: Do residents and users have a sense of ownership and responsibility for space?

- Access and escape routes: Are the opportunities for offenders to use access and escape routes minimised? Are the opportunities for victims to escape maximised?

- Image and aesthetics: Does the appearance of the area create a positive image and a feeling of safety?

- Target-hardening: Has the vulnerability of certain targets been reduced?

6.2 Key Summary Points from Community Crime Mapping Presentation

Godfrey Devulana's follow up presentation explained the process of conducting a community crime mapping exercise. The main activities include:

6.2.1   Gathering the key stakeholders for an area to a meeting.

6.2.2   Asking the stakeholders to identify the key crime hot spots on a map of the area.

6.2.3   Taking the stakeholders to the identified crime hot spots and discussing each site and taking photographs.

6.2.4   Going back to the meeting venue and analysing each crime hot spot with a view to identifying the steps that can be taken to make this hot spot safer.

6.2.5   The meeting would then conclude by drawing up a plan to ensure that the various steps that can be taken to improve the environment from a crime perspective are implemented.

6.3 Discussion Points on CPTED and Community Crime Mapping

During the facilitated discussion sessions the key points that arose were:

6.3.1   **Community Participation** is a critical ingredient in helping to make areas safer. As each area is different design guidelines for safety will need to differ from area

to area and communities are best placed to identify these differences. Communities themselves also need to better understand what improves safety in an area and which areas are crime risk points so they are empowered to take their own avoidance measures or to lobby the private and public sector to take appropriate measures.

6.3.2 While the city has taken forward a number of projects that strongly included CPTED elements there is a need to **extend CPTED approaches to private developments**. Consideration should be given to information sharing and the development of policies and by-laws to promote CPTED in private developments.

6.3.3 One of the key contributing factors to reduced environmental safety is a lack of maintenance of public facilities and public space. There is a need to ensure the **sustainability of capital projects** by incorporating long term maintenance costs into budgets. In addition there needs to be a **strong focus on maintenance of existing facilities and spaces**.

6.3.4 **Accessible and up to date crime information** that includes spatial locations is very helpful to the police, the community and planners. There should be efforts to improve this information and to make it more accessible.

Appendix: Group Discussion

After the presentations the participants broke up into two groups to discuss the following key issues:

1. Institutionalisation of Crime Prevention

   o Integration and implementation

   o Long-term maintenance – how do we integrate across departments to enable long-term maintenance of public spaces.

2. Community involvement in Crime Prevention and ownership of crime prevention initiatives in public and private open spaces

3. Current opportunities and barriers for institutional integration for crime prevention

The key issues that arose from the group discussions were:

Feedback from First Group

Crime Prevention
- Integration and Implementation
- Publicise crime
- Community Networking through ABM systems and forums, ward committees and CPFs
- Institution Negotiation – get together early in terms of projects. "Brainstorming not blame-storming"
- Integrated approach- identify departments to make the initiative a success. Create a measurement across borders in the IDP.
- A crime prevention model
- Area Based Initiatives
- Stakeholder Involvement
- Community Safety Initiative (CSI)
- Line Departments should be trained to be focused on Safety Design
- Incorporate in tertiary institutions- alignment
- Timing is essential – spending time on the foundation stage
- Education and Awareness using facilities made available by the local authority. Use cellphone technology and Sizakala Centres to disseminate information.
- Inter and Intra and external communication
- Good Integration with institutions e.g. CPF
- Increase / bartering of knowledge
- Train urban designers on CPTED

Feedback from Second Group

Crime Prevention

- Integrate line departments from the start of a project
- On a project basis
- Coordination of a project – sustainability from cradle to grave
- Integration: ABM Approach (Geographically) – Planning, Design, Implementation, Consultation with Community. Look at iTRUMP as an example.
- Context specific approach
- Regionalise ABM: Demography and lifestyle and type of crime
- ABM: People led but consult with Council Officials
- Develop a policy across line departments: Coordinate with other departments, link with outside organizations e.g. VPUU, create a buy-in notion on each and every department, Capital project should have a maintenance plan for 5 years, Set special by-laws.
- Involve legal department
- Accountability of departments

Barriers:

- Co-operation of DCMs
- Capacity upgrading provision
- Municipal and national line operation (create a link for integrated management)
- Continuity of Project program attendance and engagement
- Implementation plan should be practical
- Political influence
- Corruption
- Territorial flexibility
- Councillors should play their role

Community Involvement In crime:

- Every Community should have a Community Forum
- CPF should serve the community to discuss crime: Communication, Support and feedback, Play role
- Engage with schools
- Structures in play should support in any means possible
- Creative ways to involve communities – credits or rates rebates?